

REMARKS

This is in response to the outstanding Office Action dated December 10, 2009. The claims now pending in the application are 1-34. Claims 1 and 17 have been amended. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and allowance of the claims.

Response to Rejection of Claims 1-16 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the outstanding Office Action, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saarikettu (U.S. No. 5,149,583) in view of Vane (U.S. No. 5,445,693).

Independent claim 1 has been amended to provide a fabric having a plurality of substantially parallel, aligned tows with the tows arranged in one of a plurality of tow groups. Each of the tow groups has one or more tows. A portion of the tow groups contains two or more tows. The spacing between tows in a tow group is less than the spacing between juxtaposed tow groups. Each tow has a longitudinal axis and the longitudinal axes of the tows in the tow groups are in a coplanar relationship. The longitudinal axes of the tows are held in place in the coplanar relationship.

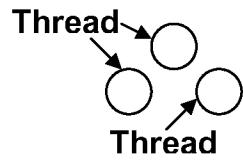
Support for amended claim 1 can be found on page 9 at lines 1-3 of the Specification.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner asserts that the combination of the Saarikettu and Vane references discloses all of the limitations of Applicant's independent claim 1. However, the Saarikettu and Vane references, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose the fabric as claimed in Applicant's amended claim 1 for several reasons.

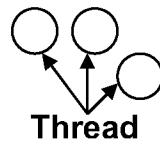
First, neither the Saarikettu nor the Vane reference disclose, mention or suggest a fabric wherein the longitudinal axes of the tows are in coplanar relationship. Rather, as shown in Figure 3, the Saarikettu reference provides a quantity of three threads (1) laid among and through courses (11, 12). Applicant agrees with the Examiner that the threads (1) disclosed in Figure 3 of the Saarikettu

reference are parallel to each other (col. 3 at lines 64-65). However, the Saarikettu reference does not disclose, mention or suggest the limitation that the longitudinal axes of the threads (1) are in a coplanar relationship. In fact, other than providing that the threads (1) are parallel to each other, the Saarikettu reference is silent as to relative arrangement of the threads (1). The Examiner uses the Vane reference to provide a reinforcing fabric which is formed from tows, yarns or threads. However, the Vane reference does not disclose, mention or suggest that the longitudinal axes of the threads (10) are in a coplanar relationship.

Second, the relative arrangement of the threads (1) provided in the Saarikettu reference, as illustrated in Fig. 3, is not clear. Rather than illustrating a co-planar relationship of the threads (1), the threads (1) could be arranged in non-planar relationships, as illustrated by the following examples:



Non-planar relationship



Non-planar relationship

Third, neither the Saarikettu nor the Vane reference disclose, mention or suggest a fabric wherein the tows are held in place in the coplanar relationship. As discussed above, the Saarikettu reference merely provides a quantity of three parallel threads (1) laid among and through courses (11, 12). The Saarikettu reference is silent as to holding the threads (1) in place in any relative arrangement, let alone a co-planar relationship.

It is well established that all claim limitations must be considered in judging the patentability of a claim against the prior art. As set forth in the MPEP, at least at §2143.03, in order to establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all of the claimed limitations must be considered against the prior art, citing *In Re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 165 USPQ 494 (CCPA 1970). In this regard, Applicant's amended independent claim 1 is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of the Saarikettu and Vane references. Therefore the rejection of amended independent claim 1 is improper and the claim is patentable as amended.

Dependent claims 2-16 depend from amended independent claim 1 and for at least this reason, are also patentable.

Response to Rejection of Claims 17-34 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the outstanding Office Action, independent claim 17 and dependent claims 18-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Saarikettu (U.S. No. 5,149,583) in view of Vane (U.S. No. 5,445,693).

Independent claim 17 has been amended to include the same limitation of the longitudinal axes of the tows being held in place in a coplanar relationship as included in claim 1.

For at least the same reasons as discussed above for claim 1, amended independent claim 17 is also patentable.

Dependent claims 18-34 depend from amended independent claim 17 and for at least this reason, are also patentable.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant has shown that the claims are in proper form for allowance, and the invention, as defined in the claims, is not taught nor disclosed by the applied reference. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of record, and allowance of all claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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